

	Community Flag Raisings & Flag Protocol Policy	
	Policy Category: Governance/Protocol	
	Policy No.:	Implementing Procedure No.:
Approving Authority: COUNCIL		Effective Date:
Approved or Last Reviewed Date:		Next Review Year:
Area(s) this policy applies to: ALL		Owner Department: LEGISLATIVE SERVICES
Related Policy(ies): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proclamation Policy 		

Note: Questions about this policy should be directed to the Owner Department.

1. Purpose Statement <i>(Outline why the organization is issuing the policy and its desired effect or outcome of the policy)</i>
<p>The Community Flag Raisings & Flag Protocol Policy establishes a framework to govern requests for flag raisings requests, received from the community, and to establish a consistent protocol for the flying of flags at all municipal buildings, properties, and facilities.</p>
2. Applicability and Scope Statement <i>(Who and what this policy applies to and/or affects)</i>
<p>This Policy applies to Community Flag Raisings held at the Markham Civic Centre, and to the flying of flags at any municipal building, property, or facilities.</p>
3. Background <i>(Indicate any reasons, history, and intent that led to the creation of the policy)</i>
<p>Markham recognizes that flags, as symbols of nations, territories and community organizations, are important to residents of the municipality. Markham is committed to building upon, while maintaining, the rich heritage of protocol associated with the flying of flags. As a matter of practice, Markham has used special flag raisings to enhance public awareness of activities such as national/independence days, multicultural events, fundraising drives, and historical commemorations important to the residents of Markham. The municipality has also flown flags at half-mast to mark periods of official mourning or commemorate solemn occasions important to the residents.</p>
4. Definitions <i>(If applicable, define any terminology or interpret meanings of a general term)</i>
<p>A) "Community Flag Pole" means any flagpole at the Markham Civic Centre designated for Community Flag Raisings.</p>

- B) **“Flying a Flag at Half-mast”** means the action of flying all flags, forming a single display of flags, at a position that is equal distance from the top and bottom of a flagpole, to mark periods of mourning or to commemorate solemn occasions.
- C) **“National Flag of Canada”** means the flag approved by the Parliament of Canada as a national symbol of Canada.
- D) **“Provincial Flag of Ontario”** means the flag approved by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as a national symbol of Ontario.
- E) **“Clerk”** means the Town Clerk appointed by the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Markham, or his/her designate.
- F) **“Town of Markham Flag”** means the Flag adopted by the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Markham as a symbol of the municipality. The Town of Markham Flag may be granted, registered, approved or confirmed by the Canadian Heraldic Authority.

5. Policy Statements *(Detail the specific regulations, requirements, or modifications to organizational behaviour to be addressed by this policy)*

The following rules will be used by the Markham in respect to the flying of flags at any municipal building, property, or facility:

1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF THE POLICY

The following general principles will apply in respect to all aspects of this Policy, and be used when interpreting the Policy:

- A. The municipality will use flags to celebrate Markham’s diversity, and honour those who have contributed to the life of the Town;
- B. The flying of flags at any municipal facility will not be contrary to the principles of any other Town policy; and,
- C. The municipality will only fly flags that are approved or recognized by federal, provincial or municipal governments of Canada.

2. COMMUNITY FLAG RAISINGS

Markham has designated two (2) Community Flagpoles at the Markham Civic Centre, one adjacent to the Peace Garden, the other adjacent to the amphitheatre, to celebrate Markham’s diversity and heritage.

A. Community Flag Raising Criteria

The Criteria for approving or denying a request to use the Community Flag Poles will be:

The Community Flagpoles may be to fly flags:

- i. in honour national or independence days important to the residents of Markham;
- ii. in support of fund-raising drives important to the residents of Markham; and,
- iii. to celebrate multi-cultural and civic events important to the residents Markham.

The Community Flagpoles will not be used to fly flags

- i. of Political Parties;
- ii. of Religious Groups;
- iii. in support of fund-raising drives that are political or religious in nature; and
- iv. in support of groups, organizations, or events that promote beliefs contrary to any other Town policy.

The Clerk will be responsible for providing advice, as necessary, on the applicability of any of the above criteria to any application received for Community Flag Raisings.

B. Applications for use of the Community Flagpoles

All requests for use of the Community Flagpoles will be made in writing to the Clerk. Applications are to be submitted at least one (3) weeks prior to the day requested for the raising of the flag. The Clerk will review all applications to determine consistency with this Policy, and will:

- i. If the flag raising was previously approved by Council within 5 years of the current request, and is consistent with this Policy, the flag raising will be approved and noted on a Council Agenda for information purposes;
- ii. If the flag raising was not previously approved by Council, or was approved by Council more then 5 years before the current request, the Clerk will make a recommendation to Council to approve or deny the application on a Council Agenda prior to the date of the proposed flag raising; and,
- iii. During the summer recess of Council the Clerk will decided to approve or deny any flag raising not previously approved by Council within the last five (5) years, any decisions will be noted on a Council Agenda for information purposes.

C. General Rules for the Community Flagpoles

The general rules for the use of the Community Flagpoles are as follows:

- i. Flags will be flown for up to 1 week at a time;

- ii. Approvals and use of the flagpoles will be granted on a first come-first served basis; and,
- iii. When more than one (1) flag-raising occurs on the same day (or during the same period of time), the choice of which Community Flagpole will be used to fly which flag will be determined as follows:
 - a) The Community Flagpole adjacent to the Peace Garden will be deemed the position of honour;
 - b) Flags of other nations will be given higher precedent over non-national flags; and,
 - c) Where the flags are of the same level of precedent, the position of honour will be assigned to the application received first by the Clerk.
- iv. Individuals, groups or association requesting flag raisings are required to provide the flag to be raised.

3. FLAG PROTOCOL

Markham's protocol for the flying on flags at all municipal facilities, excluding the Community Flagpoles at the Civic Centre, are incorporated into this Policy as appendices. Appendix "A" are the protocols Markham will use in honouring contributions to the life of the municipality through Flying a Flag at Half-mast. Appendix "B" are the protocols Markham will use in determining how flags will usually be flown at any municipal facility.

6. Roles and Responsibilities *(Outline roles and responsibilities of those involved in the implementation of the policy)*

Council

Council is responsible for approving and amending this Policy. Council is specifically responsible for approving flag raisings under **section 2(B)(ii)**, and receiving information on approved flag raisings under **section 2(B)(i)** and **section 2(B)(ii)** of this Policy. Council is further responsible for passing resolutions commemorating Other Solemn Occasions under **Appendix A, Section C** of the Policy.

The Clerk

The Clerk will be responsible for the interpretation of this Policy, as well as the development of procedures for the effective and efficient implementation of the Policy. The Clerk is specifically responsible for receiving and processing applications for flag raisings, notifying appropriate staff at Town facilities of periods of official mourning or the commemoration of solemn occasions.

Appendix “A”**FLYING FLAGS AT HALF-MAST**

The Town’s protocol for Flying a Flag at Half-mast will be:

A. Periods of Official Mourning

Flags will be flown at half-mast at all Town facilities to mark periods of official mourning upon the death of:

- i. The Sovereign;
- ii. A Member of the Canadian Royal Family;
- iii. The Governor General of Canada, or a former Governor General;
- iv. The Prime Minister of Canada, or a former Prime Minister;
- v. The Leader of Her Majesty’s Loyal Opposition, Parliament of Canada
- vi. The Lieutenant Governor of Ontario;
- vii. The Premier of Ontario;
- viii. The Leader of Her Majesty’s Loyal Opposition, Legislative Assembly of Ontario
- ix. A local Member of Parliament, or a local Member of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario;
- x. The Mayor or a former Mayor;
- xi. A Member of Council or a former Member of Council;
- xii. The Regional Chair or a former Regional Chair;
- xiii. A current employee of the Town of Markham;
- xiv. A York Region Police Officer who dies in the line of duty; and
- xv. A resident of Markham, who is a member of the Canadian Armed Forces, killed while deployed on operations.

Flags will be flown at half-mast, in the case of a national or provincial official, for the duration established by the appropriate federal or provincial protocol offices. In the case of other persons, flags will be flown at half mast from the date the notice of death is received until sunset on the date of the funeral for that individual.

The Clerk will be responsible for coordinating the lowering of flags at municipal facilities.

B. Markham Fire & Emergency Services Facilities

The Markham Fire & Emergency Services may mark a period of official mourning for other fire and emergency personnel who have died in the line of duty, or any other traditional commemorations of solemn occasions important to fire and emergency personnel. This applies to Markham Fire Stations only.

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C. Commemoration of Solemn Occasions

Flags will be flown at half-mast annually, at all municipal facilities, to commemorate the following solemn occasions:

- i. Day Mourning for Persons Killed or Injured in the Workplace (April 28)
- ii. Remembrance Day (November 11); and,
- iii. National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women (December 6).

D. Other Periods of Official Mourning & Solemn Occasions

The commemoration of other periods of official mourning and solemn occasions, in keeping with the General Principles of this Policy, may be approved by the Mayor. A notice of any approval issued by the Mayor will be placed on a future Council Agenda for informational purposes.

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Appendix “B”

CUSTOMARY FLAG CONFIGURATION

Markham’s protocol for the usual configuration of flags at municipal facilities will be:

A. Anthony Roman Civic Centre

The three (3) flagpole display immediately adjacent to the entrance to the Anthony Roman Civic Centre will be reserved to fly only the National Flag of Canada, the Provincial Flag of Ontario, and the Flag of the Town of Markham. The National Flag of Canada will be flown on the centre flagpole which is the customary position of honour. To an observer facing the entrance to the Civic Centre, the Provincial Flag of Ontario will fly to the left of the National Flag of Canada, and the Flag of Town of Markham will be flown to its right.

Where the Town has received a significant award or recognition that includes an approved flag, that flag may be flown for a limited period of time, but no more then for one week each year, on the flagpole usually reserved for the Flag of the Town of Markham. Other flags will not be flown on any of these flagpoles, except in the circumstances noted under the heading “Dignitary Visits.”

B. Other Municipal Facilities

i. When the facility has only one (1) flagpole

The National Flag of Canada will be flown at facilities with only one flagpole. Another flag will not be flown under the National Flag of Canada. Other flags will not be flown at these facilities, except in the circumstances noted in under the heading “Dignitary Visits.”

ii. When the facility has two (2) flagpoles configured to form a single display

The National Flag of Canada and the either the Provincial Flag of Ontario or the Flag of the Town of Markham will be flown. The customary position of honour, the left flagpole to an observer facing the display, will be used to fly the National Flag of Canada. Other flags will not be flown on these flagpoles, except in the circumstances noted under the heading “Dignitary Visits.”

iii. When the facility has three (3) flagpoles configured to form a single display

The National Flag of Canada, the Ontario Provincial Flag, and the Flag of the Town of Markham will be flown. The National Flag of Canada will be flown on the centre flagpole which is the



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customary position of honour. To an observer facing the display, the Provincial Flag of Ontario will fly to the left of the National Flag of Canada, and the Flag of Town of Markham will be flown to its right. Other flags will not be flown on these flagpoles, except in the circumstances noted under the heading “Dignitary Visits.”

C. Shared Government Facilities

At Shared Government Facilities (e.g. Markham & York Region Joint Fire & EMT Stations) arrangement of flags at facilities shared by the Town and another government will be decided by written agreement between the governments and in accordance with applicable protocol. The Clerk will be responsible for representing the Town and confirming such arrangements.

DIGNITARY VISITS

In the event of a visit by a dignitary to a Town of Markham facility, the Town may fly a flag representing that dignitary. The flying of a flag to mark the dignitary’s visit will be made only after consulting with an appropriate protocol officer responsible for coordinating the visit.